

# Media Release

## Yavapai County Sheriff's Office

**Scott Mascher – Sheriff**

255 E. Gurley Street, Prescott, AZ 86301

Dwight D'Evelyn - Media Coordinator

928-777-7441



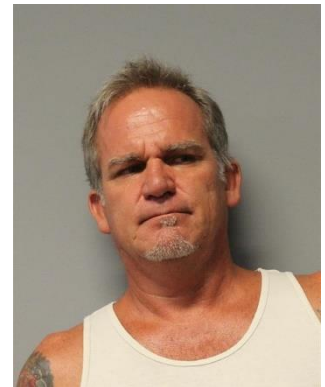
**July 25, 2018**

### ***55-year-old Suspect Arrested for Sexual Assault of Teen under the Age of 15***

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On July 23, 2018, YCSO detectives were notified by the parents of a teenage daughter that a person known to them had sexually assaulted their daughter in a Prescott area home. Detectives conducted an extensive interview with the victim who explained that earlier this year, Richard Edwards (age 55 from Cottonwood), contacted her on the Snapchat social media application expressing sexual desire for her. Eventually, Edwards showed up unannounced at the victim's front door. When she opened the door, he grabbed her and forced her into a bedroom, *sexually assaulted her*, and threatened to kill her if she talked. No other family was home at the time.

In the weeks that followed, Edwards was able to be present in situations that allowed him to continue molesting the victim at other locations. The victim was so scared of Richard's actions, she eventually told a trusted family member and the Sheriff's Office was contacted.



Richard Edwards

On July 24, 2018, detectives located Edwards at his Cottonwood home and placed him in-custody for charges including Sexual Assault, Sexual Conduct with a Minor, Sexual Abuse, Lure Minor for Sexual Exploitation and Threatening. He remains in-custody on a \$500,000 cash bond.

Note: Detectives learned that Edwards was initially able to find the victim via the Snapchat location-sharing feature. Parents/Guardians who allow young children/teens access to social media should have unrestricted access to ANY accounts being used by their children. Monitoring social media activity is important to the safety and welfare of young children who may be reluctant to report contact with predators. This oversight by parents could be a lifesaving measure as seen in examples around the country where predators have created the opportunity to harm, injure and even kill their victims.

If anyone has further information on suspect Edwards in context to this arrest, please call detective David Moya at 928-771-3278.

**Citizens can contact the Yavapai County Sheriff's Office with information or questions at 928-771-3260**

**or the YCSO website: [www.ycsoaz.gov](http://www.ycsoaz.gov)**